



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Point Reyes National  
Seashore

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## Point Reyes National Seashore Fire Management



Fuelbreak construction along Bayview Fire Road



Crew working on the Inverness Ridge fuelbreak

### Inverness Ridge Fuelbreak Improves Community Protection in Wildfire Recovery Area

#### Purpose of Treatment

The border of Point Reyes National Seashore along the northern half of Inverness Ridge, is densely vegetated with a young stand of Bishop pine which resprouted after the 1995 Vision Fire. A fuelbreak along this ridge is needed to help protect the subdivision of Paradise Ranch Estates. This subdivision of approximately 135 parcels, lost 45 homes during the Vision Fire. Several other subdivisions running parallel to the fuelbreak will also benefit from the role it plays in enhancing fire management strategies.

The Inverness Ridge fuelbreak is being constructed along the Bayview Fire Road and the Inverness Ridge Trail. The Bayview Fire Road connects Paradise Ranch Estates with Limantour Road, providing critical emergency access for firefighters. Firefighters may also use this road as an anchor point from which to conduct burnout operations in order to control a wildfire. Limantour Road is a two-way paved road which bisects the center of Point Reyes National Seashore. The Bayview Fire Road, is unpaved, and is a vital escape route for residents who would otherwise be trapped on the ridge if alternative routes became unavailable to the east. The Bayview Fire Road narrows and transitions into Inverness Ridge Trail when it reaches the edge of the subdivision at Sunnyside Road.

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## **Treatment Activities**

During the 2003 and 2004 field seasons, thinning was done along a two mile corridor, 10 feet on each side of the fire road, and 30 feet on each side of the trail. Crowded thickets of Bishop pine were thinned to 1 tree every 20 feet. Common vegetation such as ceanothus, coyote brush, sticky monkey flower, poison oak and blackberry was removed. However, a survey of the treatment area was done to prevent impacts to Marin manzanita, a rare chaparral shrub which regenerated heavily after the Vision Fire. The plant survey also identified several occurrences of rare California bottlebrush grass. The two rare plants were left intact. The vegetation that was removed, was chipped onsite.

Fuel removal was accomplished by the Point Reyes hazardous fuels crew, and crews from the Marin Conservation Corps. Firefighters from Lava Beds National Monument, as well as Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, also assisted with this project.

## **Community Involvement**

The Inverness Ridge fuel break was recommended in a community fire management plan prepared for Paradise Ranch Estates in 2002 with Community Assistance funding from the National Fire Plan. A section of this fuel break was also recommended in a 1996 report entitled, "After the Vision Fire", commissioned for the Inverness Ridge Communities by the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin. The Inverness Ridge fuel break on National Park Service land is strategically related to several other fuel breaks in the subdivision which are in closer proximity to the structures. The Inverness Ridge fuel break was planned in cooperation with Marin County Fire Department.

Work on this project will be continued in the 2005 field season. Once completed, this fuel break will require ongoing maintenance every other year, due to the rapid growth rates in the lush coastal environment of the Point Reyes peninsula.

## **For More Information:**

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